

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

May 14, 1962

MEMORANDUM OF MEETINGS HELD AT 3:30 AND 4:15 PM, ON
MONDAY, MAY 14, 1962.

At 3:30 Messrs. Rusk, McNamara, McCone, Harriman and Alexis Johnson met to discuss the deployment of troops into Thailand, details of which are described later, and possible actions in Laos to prevent further Communist military action. McNamara stated he was not prepared to discuss this subject with the President as the subject was under intense review by JCS; therefore it was agreed that this subject would not be raised at the NSC meeting.

At 4:15 the NSC meeting was convened, attended by the President, Secretary Rusk, Messrs. Harriman, McNamara, McCone, Forrestal, and Bundy, and General Taylor.

1. The President requested a briefing on military situation in Laos. McCone reviewed SNIE 58-4-62 in detail, using attached notes except for numbered item 3 which was covered by close following of numbered paragraph 3 of the SNIE, and numbered item 6 in which the wording of numbered paragraph 6 of the SNIE was used.

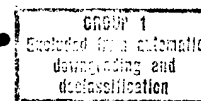
2. Rusk then reported that Souvanna Phouma was to leave Paris for Laos on Saturday -- that the meeting of the three Princes was arranged for all practical purposes -- Souvanna Phouma would first see the King in Vientiane. Ambassador Thompson's message from Moscow and Ambassador Young's two messages from Bangkok were read by the President and discussed briefly. (Moscow 2945, Bangkok 1774 & 1775).

3. McNamara recommended following procedure which was agreed to:

(a) Air Force operational headquarters be located in Thailand and an Air Force fighter squadron at Takhli involving 800 men. Marine headquarters be established at Udorn and a Marine battalion of approximately 1800 men be located in the vicinity of Ubon. Present

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battle group of 1,000 men be reinforced by an additional 1200, making a total of 2200 men to be located about 40 miles west of Korat. Naval Task Force to be deployed to the Gulf of Siam. When deployment is completed, in 48 to 72 hours, United States will have five to six thousand men in Thailand, plus about 1,000 MAAG, plus the Naval complement.

4. Rusk cleared a press announcement. President convened a Bi-Partisan Leadership meeting at 9:15 Tuesday, requesting Rusk, McNamara, McCone and Lemnitzer attend. President requested McCone call General Eisenhower prior to the meeting. It was agreed to inform SEATO partners immediately, and Rusk was asked to meet with French and British Ambassadors tonight at 7:00 o'clock, and to urge their participation by the deployment of units to Thailand and their support with the press.

5. The question of military action in Laos arose. McNamara reported that the subject was under consideration. Rusk stated that if action occurs he would immediately go before the United Nations and request the strongest possible censure; in the meantime US military moves were under study. The President questioned the effect our moves in Thailand would have on the cease-fire. McCone stated the USIB estimate concluded that in the absence of progress towards the forming of a coalition government or evidences of effective military response, we could expect Communist military thrusts in the Nam Tha scale but probably not an all-out military drive until US reactions had been fully assessed. Note: See numbered paragraph 8 in 58-4-62.

6. The President ordered informative cables sent to interested Ambassadors.

John A. McCone
Director

JAM: 

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